

Message Text

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TO USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME

INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 043602

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, IT, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: UK PROPOSAL AND NON- CIRCUMVENTION

VIENNA FOR USDEL MBFR

HELSINKI FOR USDEL MPT

1. ITALIAN CHARGE DE BENEDICTIS CALLED ON DEPUTY
ASSISTANT SECRETARY SPRINGSTEEN MARCH 7 TO REITERATE GOI
OPPOSITION TO BRITISH " ALL 19" FORMULA. ITALIANS FEEL
THAT BRITISH PROPOSAL WOULD LEAD TO A SITUATION IN WHICH
STATUS OF PARTICIPANTS WOULD BE COMPLETELY UNCLEAR. GOI
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IS DETERMINED THAT ITALY SHOULD MAINTAIN POSITION AS SPECIAL PARTICIPANT AND THEREFORE OPPOSES EQUIVOCAL PROPOSALS SUCH AS THAT PUT FORWARD BY UK. UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES, GOI WOULD PREFER IF NECESSARY TO RETURN TO US FALL- BACK POSITION THAT HUNGARY BE CONSIDERED AS SPECIAL PARTICIPANT. SINCE US PREFERRED FORMULA ON PARTICIPATION ALREADY APPEARS UNACCEPTABLE TO SOVIETS, GOI HOPES WE WILL PURSUE OUR FALL- BACK POSITION.

2. TURNING TO SUBJECT OF NON- CIRCUMVENTION IN ANNEX II OF " NON- PAPER" NOW UNDER NAC CONSIDERATION, DE BENEDICTIS REITERATED ITALIAN CONCERN THAT SPECIAL MENTION OF HUNGARY WOULD OFFER OPPORTUNITY FOR SOVIETS TO COUNTER WITH ITALY. GOI THEREFORE WISHES TO AVOID MENTION OF HUNGARY AND FAVORS A MORE GENERAL FORMULA ALONG LINES FOLLOWING LANGUAGE: QUOTE: THE FACT THAT CERTAIN COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL EUROPE WOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE CATEGORY OF 'SPECIAL' PARTICIPANTS SHOULD NOT PERMIT THAT THE POSITION OF THESE COUNTRIES (WHICH WILL NOT SIGN EVENTUAL AGREEMENTS) COULD POSSIBLY SERVE, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, TO CIRCUMVENT THE AGREEMENT THROUGH AN INCREASE OF FORCES STATIONED IN THE SAME COUNTRIES, LIABLE OF MODIFYING THE GENERAL EQUILIBRIUM IN EUROPE. UNQUOTE.

3. SPRINGSTEEN THEN REVIEWED OUR GENERAL POSITION ON PARTICIPATION, POINTING OUT THAT WE ALSO HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE UK "19" PROPOSAL IN VIEW OF ITS UNSTRUCTURED NATURE. MOREOVER, IT LEAVES AMBIGUOUS THE ISSUE OF PARTICIPATION BY THE FLANKS. THIS, OF COURSE, MIGHT BE CORRECTED. THERE COULD, FOR EXAMPLE, BE A GATHERING OF THE 19, IN LINE WITH THE UK PROPOSAL, AT WHICH ANYONE WHO DID NOT WISH TO PARTICIPATE DIRECTLY COULD SO INDICATE. IT WOULD, OF COURSE, HAVE TO BE UNDERSTOOD IN ADVANCE THAT THIS PROCEDURE WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO ALL, AND PARTICULARLY THAT THE DUTCH AND BELGIANS WOULD AGREE TO BE DIRECT PARTICIPANTS, AND NOT OPT OUT. HOWEVER, THE BRITISH PROPOSAL AS NOW DRAFTED DOES NOT ENVISAGE THIS.

4. IN RESPONSE TO DE BENEDICTIS' S QUERY AS TO THE PRESENT STATE OF PLAY ON THE PARTICIPATION ISSUE, SPRINGSTEEN SAID THAT AS OF THE MOMENT, THE BRITISH ARE CONFIDENTIAL

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HOLDING THE LINE ON THEIR PROPOSAL, AND WE HAVE NO IDEA

WHEN THEY MAY WITHDRAW FROM IT. ON THE ISSUE OF
CONSTRAINTS, SPRINGSTEEN NOTED OUR VIEW THAT THIS ISSUE
SHOULD BE INSCRIBED ON THE AGENDA FOR EVENTUAL DISCUSSION
DURING THE ACTUAL MBFR NEGOTIATIONS. IN THE MEANTIME,
THE SUBJECT COULD BE THOROUGHLY STUDIED WITHIN NATO.
ON THE SUBJECT OF NON- CIRCUMVENTION, SPRINGSTEEN SAID WE
ARE PREPARED TO AGREE TO A GENERAL FORMULATION, AND IN
THIS CONNECTION WILL GIVE CAREFUL ATTENTION TO THE
LANGUAGE PROPOSED BY THE GOI.

ROGERS

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